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SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 154 | Gangtok | Sunday | 14 June 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

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SDF-West condemns attack on JB Darnal

RUDRA KAUSHIK GYALSHING, 13 JUN:

The west district unit of Sikkim Democratic Front today strongly condemned the violent attack on its spokesperson JB Darnal in Gangtok on Friday evening. They have termed the attack as “undemocratic, tragic, politically motivated and a conspiracy to silence voices being raised on behalf of the Sikkimese people.”

Addressing a press conference at the SDF party office here, party functionaries condemned the incident and maintained that the right to free speech was being smothered with such acts of violence.

They contended that the democratic values and rights of the people are being compromised by the SKM government and demanded the immediate arrest of the culprits.

SDF senior vice president (in-charge), RB Subba, maintained that Mr Darnal had been speaking strongly for the Sikkimese through the pandemic and added that if he was wrong, then a case should have been registered against him and due process of law followed instead of the attempt to silence him through violence.

He stressed that questions, suggestions and questions raised by Mr Darnal were genuine and necessary.

He alleged that under the present SKM government, cases of violence and suppression have spiked.

SDF spokesperson, Krishna Lepcha, also condemned the attack and remarked that political vendetta was undemocratic and the attack unfortunate.

Claiming that SDF had never resorted to oppressive politics even when some persons had spoken openly against its government, Mr Lepcha maintained that an opposition party has the right to raise uncomfortable questions about policies, plans and functioning of the state government.

Pujan Kharka, an advocate and a legal advisor of the party, in turn, shared that the right to freedom of speech must be respected and questions raised by the Opposition answered in a civil manner by the State Government and the SKM.

Sikkim's first and second COVID patients recover

SAGAR CHETTRI GANGTOK, 13 JUN:

The first and second COVID-19 patients of Sikkim were discharged from STNM hospital, Socheygang, on Saturday. After testing negative repeatedly they have been discharged from the Isolation Ward of the hospital and sent for home quarantine.

It has to be mentioned here that the first patient is a 25-year-old Delhi returnee from South Sikkim, while the second case is a 54-year-old Delhi returnee from East Sikkim.

Meanwhile, the fourth batch of 50 health workers took charge today as the third batch of 43 left for quarantine after completing one week of duty in the COVID-19 facility at STNM hospital.

Sikkim's COVID tally now stands at 58. Out of the 36 new cases reported on Friday evening, 23



are from South Sikkim. 1 had returned from Dehradun, 2 from Bihar, 2 from Uttar Pradesh and 18 from Maharashtra.

There are 13 cases from West Sikkim, all of whom had returned from Maharashtra. All 36 new

cases are asymptomatic.

Health Minister, Dr MK Sharma, Director General-cum-Secretary, Dr PT Bhutia and other senior officials and health workers were also present to see off the two COVID survivors. They

also thanked the outgoing health workers and welcomed the new group of health workers.

Speaking to media persons, DG-cum-Secretary mentioned that the recovery of COVID patients is proof of the ef-

iciency of STNM hospital and its staff.

“We are here to appreciate the hard work of the team of doctors and health workers as our manpower is efficient and capable of handling the situation so people should have confi-

dence in our hospital and health workers,” he said.

While talking on 36 new positive cases detected on Friday, the Secretary informed that all patients of West Sikkim have been shifted to the isolation ward at Gyalshing District Hos-

pital, while patients from Namchi have been shifted to STNM hospital.

Dr Bhutia informed that a total of 191 people came from Mumbai and tests of some more Mumbai returnees is still being processed and results are awaited.

CM'S MESSAGE ON RECOVERY OF TWO COVID PATIENTS

“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

I am pleased to know that the first two positive patients of COVID-19 in the State have been discharged from STNM, Socheygang today.

Kudos to our frontline warriors who have been working tirelessly, since day one and their indomitable will to serve their state and its people. I reiterate that we are capable of handling the situation and co-operation from our citizens is all we require.

I urge every Sikkimese to pray for the speedy recovery of other positive cases and especially for the safety of our frontline warriors.

It is my humble request to our citizens to be cautious now, more than ever and continue adhering to the guidelines for their own safety and their loved ones.”



NANDOK COVID SURVIVOR WELCOMED BACK

The second COVID patient of the State was welcomed home in Nandok by Health Education Officer, PRI members, ASHA and local residents today. HEO, Gyanendra Karki sensitized the public of the area in view of the return of the COVID survivor.

Petrol price hiked for seventh day in a row

NEW DELHI, JUN 13 (PTI): Petrol price on Saturday was hiked by 59 paise per litre and diesel by 58 paise as oil companies for the seventh day in a row adjusted retail rates in line with costs since ending an 82-day hiatus in rate revision.

Petrol price in Delhi was hiked to Rs 75.16 per litre from Rs 74.57, while diesel rates were increased to Rs 73.39 a litre from Rs 72.81, according to a price notification of state oil marketing companies.

Rates have been increased **turn to pg 02**

Asymptomatic COVID-19: Five things to know

SABA AZIZ

DOHA, 13 JUN [ALJAZEERA]:

Since the first cluster of cases of the novel coronavirus was reported in China last December, scientists have been racing to get a better understanding of the highly contagious disease, COVID-19, and how to stop its spread.

The coronavirus is transmitted from person to person through direct contact, droplets of saliva while coughing or discharge from the nose when sneezing.

But there is ongoing scientific debate and research concerning the contagion passing on from asymptomatic carriers.

WHAT IS ASYMPTOMATIC?
Asymptomatic means a person has been infected by the virus, but does not feel sick or develop any symptoms.

This is different from pre-symptomatic, which means a person does not show the symptoms in the early stages of the illness but develops them later on.

For those who are not asymptomatic, the time between infection and the onset of symptoms can range from one to 14 days. Most infected people show



symptoms within five to six days.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, fatigue and a dry cough. Some patients may experience aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhoea, or a loss of smell or taste.

CAN ASYMPTOMATIC PEOPLE SPREAD CORONAVIRUS?
The general consensus among health officials and experts is: Yes.

WHO has maintained that asymptomatic people can transmit COVID-19 but more research is required to determine the extent of the transmission.

Dr Naheed Usmani, president of the Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent

of North America (APPNA), told Al Jazeera: “Asymptomatic people are generally not being screened, at least in the United States. They can definitely spread the disease.”

HOW CAN ASYMPTOMATIC CARRIERS SPREAD THE VIRUS?

Like symptomatic and pre-symptomatic cases, asymptomatic people can shed the virus in many ways, including through spitting, coughing and sneezing.

Infection can also be passed on through direct contact with others or by contaminating surfaces and objects.

“When you speak, sometimes you’ll spit a little bit,” Anne Rimoin, an epidemiology professor at UCLA’s School of

Public Health, told CNN.

“You’ll rub your nose. You’ll touch your mouth. You’ll rub your eyes. And then you’ll touch other surfaces, and then you will be spreading virus if you are infected and shedding” the virus.

ARE ASYMPTOMATIC COVID-19 CARRIERS LESS CONTAGIOUS?

This remains unclear and more research is required.

Based on current evidence, WHO says asymptotically infected individuals are less likely to transmit the virus than those who develop symptoms.

Dr Usmani concurs. She said: “If infectivity correlates to the dose of the virus exposure, then asymptomatic carriers would be shedding lower viral copies.”

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

It is recommended to wash your hands frequently with soap and water, keep surfaces and objects clean and wear face masks, especially in crowded places.

Where possible, maintain a safe distance between yourself and others - particularly if they are coughing and sneezing - and avoid touching your face, eyes and mouth with unwashed hands.

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turn to pg 02

Resource for Environment & Development

Dr AALOK 'KOVID' SHRIVASTAVA

First and foremost, let us look around us.

The same sky, glacier, river, mountain, waterfall, lake etc. are looking neat & clean, free from dust, congestion, pollutants etc for little over ten weeks. It indicates that almost negligent Biotic interference over a period of time can lead to wonders, it can make people happy and optimistic and ultimately, can be a contributing factor for austerity. If things are ideal typical, one may ask why do we propagate the notion of Sustainable Development?

Events or developments do not happen according to a set pattern and one may need a Lock Down, only once in a Blue Moon.

With this opening statement, let me put forward my candid opinion, based on my 36 years interface with Nature, Culture and Adventure in a tiny Himalayan State. Without casting aspersions on the auspicious occasion of the 'World Environment Day', it has become a ritual if not fashion to highlight our half-hearted initiatives for environment conservation & protection. Why I say so, on this day, millions of saplings would be planted but how many will be actually protected by the day of such a celebration in 2021, could be anybody's guess. In sum and substance, one does not have to spend much time on the survival scenario. We make a mess in the Green pockets by carrying out non-viable, non-endemic and unsustainable vegetation and practices. These add to the intensity of floods, landslides, cloud bursts, drought and what not? Day in and day out, we commit the same mistake without properly assessing the actual Need of the Community.

It may not be fair to use the expres-

sion-'Resource Constrained World'. There is no dearth of resources anywhere. In a situation of 'Plenty', we perhaps do not know how to make adequate use of resources so that "enough" is left for our grand children.

In fact, wide variety of resources are present in the form of timber and non-timber forest produce (NTFP). But to begin with, an individual's expectation from forest gets precedence over thinking & planning about practical steps aimed at Community Forestry. An average forest dweller or a member from the genuine ST category collects fire wood according to his need and mostly hoarding is not resorted to by him or

Rangpo Rail Line Project (45 kms). Despite sincere & consistent efforts spanning over a decade by the State bureaucracy of Sikkim at the highest level, the project being implemented by IRCON has effectively taken off from March 2019, though the foundation stones of this 'National' project were laid by the then Vice President of India and Union Railway Minister respectively, way back in 2009. Interestingly, 86 % of the railway line will be underground, so where is the threat to the environment or for that matter, encroachment of the farm land?

It may be stated that one may or may not add to the forest or the green

densely populated countries, such as, China and India, we are adding indiscriminately to the burden of surviving green cover.

Don't we deserve a 'punishment' for the crimes against Nature committed only by a few of us?

It would have sensible to stop here. But I shall be failing in my task if I don't throw some light on the perpetual 'Man-Animal Tussle or Conflict'. We know for certain, that 'Biotic Interference Hotspots', such as, Delhi (Neelgai, Deers & Monkeys), Mumbai (Leopard), Assam, North Bengal & many parts of the North East (Tigers, Elephants & Rhinos) are always in 'NEWS'.

We generally say-'Kill the Snake, the Tiger, the Leopard, the Monkey or the Elephant without realising our own fault of intruding into their HABITAT in the name of various major or minor projects of 'Public Utility'.

IT IS NEVER OTHER WAY ROUND

To sum up, while severely condemning the slow and painful death of two pregnant female elephants in Kerala recently, we may suggest strong steps so that such inhuman crimes do not happen again. Also exploitation of animals for commercial purposes has to be minimised, if NOT stopped altogether.

We should not say only that such nefarious practices have to be dispensed with.

We suited-booted members of the 'Intelligentsia' may not have any grip over Environmental Policy formulation, but by virtue of such intercourses we can certainly influence and AIM FOR A CHANGE to make the Mother Earth A Sustainable Place.

[the writer is ex-Chief Secretary, Govt. of Sikkim]

VIEWPOINT

her. But the role of those responsible for protection of forest is not free from doubt, mainly due to inflated figures, time and again, concerning number of survived saplings and the actual revenue accruing out of forest cover.

Another area of concern is the improper implementation of The Forest Conservation Act, Forest Rights Act and variety of State and Central legislations. Not only populace living within the forest or on the fringe of it, continues to struggle but certain useful 'Linear' projects aiming at doubling the revenue of the area get stalled or delayed for no rhyme and reason. Forces responsible for such a state of affairs are not generally from the Panchayat or JFM Committees or the Local Self Government but hurdles for long periods come from clumsy movement of files from one department to another. Persons occupying the chairs change but same negative attitude prevails.

A burning example is the Sevoke-

cover but it should be our 'bounden duty' to protect the thick survived green cover. Are we doing it? Perhaps NOT. So one may venture to ask as to why are we having the Pandemic of Corona for more than five months, severely affecting more than 74 lakh persons, with death of 42 lakhs plus in 213 countries (2 Lakh 87 thousand cases & 8200 casualties in India alone)?

One of the reasons could be (yet to be proved)-we are not only fiddling with NATURE but also intruding into animal habitat, every now and then. No wonder non-conclusive debate goes on about the Climate Change, Melting of Glaciers, Erratic Earth quakes, Cyclones, Tsunami, present onslaught of Locusts and so on and so forth.

Perhaps, the famous British Classical Economist, Malthus rightly predicted: "When Man Fails, Nature Takes Over".

Without being concerned about control or stabilization of population in

SPYF condemns attack on JB Darnal

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 JUN:

Sikkim Progressive Youth Forum [SPYF] has condemned the alleged attack on SDF spokesperson, JB Darnal, that took place on 12 June.

In a press release, SPYF has said that the incident raises some serious questions on the law and security situation of the state.

The forum has demanded the immediate arrest of those behind the attack.

"In democracy, one can hold any ideology or support any political party; one can keep contrary views to the ruling dispensation as well. Sometimes the views could be offending to you as well. However, a physical assault can never be justified for that," the release states.

SPCC condemns attack on SDF spokesperson

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 13 JUN:

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee has criticized and condemned the alleged attack on Sikkim Democratic Front spokesperson, JB Darnal. The party has demanded that the administration

take action against those behind the attack.

An SPCC press release states that the attack has raised doubts over the safety and security of the people of the State so the state government needs to take the matter seriously.

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Shahid Afridi tests positive for COVID-19



KARACHI, JUN 13 (PTI):

Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi on Saturday said he has tested positive for COVID-19, becoming the first high-profile cricketer to be infected with the deadly virus.

"I've been feeling unwell since Thursday; my body had been aching badly. I've been tested and unfortunately I'm covid positive. Need prayers for a speedy recovery, InshaAllah," Afridi announced on Twitter.

Afridi played for Pakistan between 1996 and 2018, featuring in 27 Tests (1716 runs and 48 wickets), 398 ODIs (8064 runs and 395 wickets) and 99 T20 Internationals (1416 runs and 98 wickets).

He remains involved in the game and was last seen on the field in the Pakistan Super League in March.

Afridi is also actively involved in his charity work as the head of a foundation named after him. Following the coronavirus outbreak, he was seen outdoors on many occasions, mainly for his charity work.

Wishes of a speedy recovery started pouring on social media soon after Afridi made the announcement. He might have retired from international cricket his popularity in the sub-continent has not dipped.

His tweet also drew quick response from

his Pakistan teammates including Muhammad Hafeez, Shoaib Malik, Kamran Akmal and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

"Get well soon. Praying for your swift recovery!" wrote PCB on Twitter.

Hafeez said that Afridi was a "fighter by nature" and was sure that he will "fight the virus and will defeat it soon".

Akmal also joined in praying for Afridi. "Prayers are for your long, healthy life. Get well soon," he tweeted.

The Pakistan all-rounder, famous for his big-hitting, retired from international cricket in 2017.

He had already quit Tests in 2010 and ODIs after the 2015 World Cup but captained Pakistan in the World T20 in India.

Another former Pakistani international Taufeeq Umar, had also tested positive for coronavirus but he recovered earlier this month.

At least two Pakistani first-class players have died from the infection with leg-spinner Riaz Sheikh passing away in Karachi earlier this month.

Sheikh, a leg-spinner who took 116 wickets in 43 matches, died in his home.

Another Pakistani first-class player, Zafar Sarfaraz, 50, died due to the virus in April in Peshawar.

COVID-19 spreads tentacles in MP villages; rural tally at 951

BHOPAL, JUN 13 (PTI):

At least 951 persons from 462 villages in Madhya Pradesh have tested positive for novel coronavirus, a latest report from the state government has said.

According to the report, the disease has spread its tentacles in 50 districts of the state, infecting 951 people from the rural areas, of which 32 have died.

The revelation has come at a time when the state government claims that the impact of the outbreak has weakened in Madhya Pradesh.

Earlier this week, state Health Minister Narottam Mishra had said that Chief Minister Shivraj Chouhan had directed officials to focus on capital city Bhopal, as the situation in other parts of the state was under control.

Among the 951 COVID-19 patients in rural areas, 479 were labourers, including migrants who returned to the state following the lockdown, the latest panchayat and rural department's report stated. As per the



data, 336 people were infected in rural Madhya Pradesh on May 21 and of them, 130 were labourers and 206 were other villagers.

Swab samples of 29,881 people have been collected for testing from rural areas of the state so far, it stated. The infection, which was detected in 186 villages on May 21, has spread to 462 villages in just 22 days, the report revealed.

Incidentally, none of the villages in Hoshangabad and Niwari districts have reported a single case of COVID-19 so far,

the report said.

According to the data, villages in Indore district have recorded the highest number of rural COVID-19 cases with 90 persons testing positive for the infection, followed by 51 in the villages of Khar-gone, 50 in Bhind, 43 in Neemuch, 42 in Gwalior and 41 in Burhanpur.

At least 14 people have succumbed to the infection in eight villages of Indore, with six deaths reported from Baank village alone.

Meanwhile, additional chief secretary of the Panchayat and Rural Development department

Manoj Shrivastava said the state government was working hard to contain the viral spread in rural areas.

Over 14.82 lakh migrant labourers had returned to their homes from other states so far, he said. Presently, 12,04,315 migrant labourers and villagers were home quarantined or put in isolation centres, the official said.

The state government was also working towards providing jobs, food and healthcare facilities to migrant labourers.

India lacks ability to handle pressure in crucial games: Gambhir

NEW DELHI, JUN 13 (PTI):

Former opener Gautam Gambhir feels Indian players lack "mental toughness" to handle pressure in crunch situations and cannot call themselves world champions unless they prove themselves in big-ticket tournaments like the World Cup.

India won the ODI World Cup twice in 1983 and 2011 but have been knocked out in the semifinal stage in four editions, including the last two editions in 2015 and 2019. In T20 World Cups, India had

triumphed in the inaugural edition in 2007 and reached the finals in 2014.

"What sets you apart from being a good player to being a very very good player in a team squad is what you do on those crucial games. I think probably we have not been able to handle the pressure, probably other teams have been able to handle the pressure that way," Gambhir said on Star Sports' show 'Cricket Connected'.

"If you look at all the semi-finals and

finals, it just shows when playing really well in the league stage and you don't play well in the semi-finals or knockouts, it's probably your mental toughness as well."

Gambhir, who was part of the 2011 World Cup which the country won after 28 years, said India cannot call themselves world champions unless they prove themselves.

"We can keep talking that we've got everything, we have the ability to be the world champions, but till the

time you don't go on the cricket field and prove that, you will never be called the world champions," the 38-year-old said.

"It's just your ability in those crunch situations. In bilaterals and league stages you have got probably a chance to make the mistake, come to knockout stages, you don't have a chance to do that, you make a mistake and you're going back home. That's where beliefs come into play and that where India lacks in all those crucial games.

India's COVID...

Punjab has reported 2,986 cases while Kerala has 2,322 cases.

A total of 1,724 people have been infected by the virus in Uttarakhand, 1,617 in Jharkhand, 1,424 in Chhattisgarh, 961 in Tripura, 486 in Himachal Pradesh, 463 in Goa, 385 from Manipur and 334 in Chandigarh.

Ladakh has registered 239 COVID-19 cases, Puducherry 157, Nagaland 156, Mizoram 104, Arunachal Pradesh 67, Sikkim 63, Meghalaya 44 while Andaman and Nicobar Islands has registered 38 cases.

Dadar and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu together have reported 30 cases.

The ministry said 7,984 cases are being reassigned to states and "our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR". State-wise distribution is subject to further verification and reconciliation, it added.

Petrol price ...

across the country and vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local sales tax or VAT.

This is the seventh daily increase in rates in a row since oil companies on Sunday restarted revising prices in line with costs, after ending an 82-day hiatus.

In seven hikes, petrol price has gone up by Rs 3.9 per litre and diesel by Rs 4.

The freeze in rates was imposed in mid-March soon after the government hiked excise duty on petrol and diesel to shore up additional finances.

Oil PSUs Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL), instead of passing on the excise duty hikes to customers, adjusted them against the fall in the retail rates that was warranted because of a decline in international oil prices.

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Gujarat COVID-19 cases go past 23,000; death toll 1,449

AHMEDABAD, JUN 13 (PTI): Gujarat on Saturday reported 517 new COVID-19 cases and 33 deaths, including 26 from Ahmedabad, taking the total case count to 23,079 and fatalities to 1,449, state Health department said.

A total of 390 patients, including 255 from Ahmedabad and 88 from Surat, were discharged from hospitals in the day, taking the number of recovered cases to 15,891, an official release said. Gujarat now has 5,739 active cases, it said, adding that 61 patients are on ventilator support.

Apart from 26 deaths in Ahmedabad, three deaths were reported in Surat, two in Amreli and one each in Bhavnagar and Patan districts.

Of the 517 new cases, Ahmedabad alone has reported 344 cases, taking the



tally in the district to 16,306 and fatalities to 1,165, it said.

Surat and Vadodara reported 59 and 40 cases, respectively, taking the total count in Surat to 2,503,

and in Vadodara to 1,511. A total 24 of 33 districts in the state reported coronavirus cases in the day including Gandhinagar (9), Bhavnagar (7) and

Mehsana (6), it said. The state has so far tested 2,83,623 samples.

A total 2,11,867 people are quarantined. Gujarat COVID-19 figures

are as follows: Positive cases 23,079, new cases 517, deaths 1,449, discharged 15,891, active cases 5,739 and people tested so far 2,83,623.

SKM thanks health workers

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 13 JUN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has thanked the entire team of doctors, nurses, paramedical staff, safai karmacharis and STNM hospital authority on the recovery of two more positive patients from STNM hospital. The party has said that recovery of the two patients shows the capability and preparedness of the State.

An SKM press release

states that the recovery of two patients is also an answer to various opposition parties who have been leveling allegations against the state government.

The release mentions that the state government led by the CM, PS Tamang has not left any stone unturned in the fight against this pandemic. The party has appealed to the people to stay alert and be positive in this fight against COVID-19.

580 Indians stranded in Kuwait return home

CHENNAI, JUN 13 (PTI): Nearly 600 Indian nationals stuck in Kuwait returned home on Saturday by two special flights operated by the gulf nation, airport officials here said.

As many as 580 passengers who arrived here hailed from different parts of Andhra Pradesh including Nellore and were later taken in special buses arranged by

the AP government after completion of immigration and Customs formalities, they said.

The stranded Indians arrived by two Kuwait Airways relief flights on Saturday morning and later left for the neighbouring state, where the required COVID-19 health protocols including quarantining, would be done, the officials added.

5 more persons recover from COVID-19 in Meghalaya



SHILLONG, JUN 13 (PTI): Five more COVID-19 infected persons have recovered from the disease in Meghalaya in the last two days, taking the total number of recovered people in the state to 23, officials said on Saturday.

Meghalaya reported its last COVID-19 patient on June 10 when a pregnant woman tested positive at the North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences, they said.

"Five persons have recovered in the past two days.

Four of them were declared recovered yesterday and one was declared recovered today," a senior Health department official told PTI.

He said no fresh COVID-19 case has been detected in the state since June 10.

Meghalaya has so far reported 44 COVID-19 cases of which 20 are still active, 23 have recovered and one has died.

Over 15,000 people have returned to Meghalaya from other states and nearly 13,000 samples have been tested till date, the official said.

Lillete Dubey to pen memoir



NEW DELHI, JUN 13 (PTI): Actor and theatre veteran Lillete Dubey will come out with her memoir next year chronicling her journey of over four decades in films and television.

HarperCollins India said it has acquired the world rights to Dubey's book, which has not been titled yet. The book will be about her professional craft: theatre and cinema, but she will share some life-defining personal moments together with the experiences and anecdotes of working with an incredible array of talents and personalities.

"This will be a memoir that explores my theatrical journey of over four decades and my ex-

periences as an actor for the past 20 years in films and television, both nationally and internationally, that ran parallel to it," says Dubey.

Both these journeys were unusual choices at the time and both very different from the norm in a sense, she adds.

"From the exuberant 1970s to this unimaginably altered, almost dystopian world that we have inherited after COVID-19, it is both the tracing of a professional life where passion ruled all, and the inextricable connection that it always had with my personal life, and how these two mirrored and informed each other."

Dubey, 66, has worked in both Bolly-

wood and Hollywood films and performed in numerous plays nationally and internationally. She is also a theatre director and the founder of The Primetime Theatre Company.

"Lillete Dubey's forthcoming memoir provides a deep look at the world of entertainment and its passionate and talented inhabitants, as it recounts a journey from a more innocent, exuberant world to the more intrusive, dystopian one we now inhabit," says Krishan Chopra, publisher, HarperCollins India.

Commissioning editor of the book Ananya Borgohain adds that this book will be a "profound contribution to performing arts in our country."

'Special' passing out parade held at Naval air station

CHENNAI, JUN 13 (PTI): A 'special' passing out parade (POP) adhering to all social distancing norms in these COVID-19 times was held at the Naval Air Station Rajali at Arakkonam, near here, on Saturday.

The POP was held to mark the graduation of the 94th Helicopter Conversion Course (HCC) and eight Navy pilots were awarded with the prestigious "Wings of Gold" by Commodore Shreerang Joglekar, Commanding Officer INS Rajali, a Defence release here said.

"A special Passing-out Parade (POP) adhering to all safety and social distancing norms was held at the Naval Air Station Rajali, Arakkonam," it said.

The pilots under-

went rigorous flying and ground training for 20 weeks at Indian Naval Air Squadron 561, the Helicopter Training School (HTS).

The release said due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, training activities for the pilots at HTS also had to be "severely restricted keeping in mind the safety aspects against COVID-19."

Subsequently new procedures for conduct of safe flying operations, adhering to all the safety precautions, were promulgated.

These included "daily sanitisation of aircraft and squadron premises whilst maintaining a safe and conducive training environment adhering to social distancing norms," it said.

Training recom-

menced on April 20 and methodical planning and execution resulted in time bound completion.

The performance of the squadron to provide well trained and professionally sound helicopter pilots to the Indian Navy "on time" remains unmatched, the release said.

During training, the pilots are introduced to several nuances of helicopter flying and undergo a 'challenging' syllabus including navigation, night flying and operations over sea, it said.

The newly qualified pilots will be appointed to various front-line operational units of the Indian Navy and take up missions like Search and Rescue (SAR), Reconnaissance and anti-piracy patrols, the release added.

SUSA seeks clarity on financial assistance to non-Sikkimese students

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 13 JUN:

Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) has written to the Chief Minister on financial assistance to Non-Sikkimese students currently residing in Sikkim and studying in Sikkim University.

In a press release issued today, SUSA has said that a recent IPR re-

lease had mentioned that financial assistance has been extended to Non-Sikkimese students currently residing in Sikkim and studying in Sikkim University. However, no such financial assistance has been provided so far, SUSA states.

The IPR release was about a second review meeting convened by the Governor of Sikkim dated 8th June 2020.

"Regarding the confirmation of news SUSA had a talk with HRDD Officials and CM Office, but we could not receive any positive response till date. So, on behalf of all the students of Sikkim University, we SUSA would like to seek your official confirmation regarding the validity of the statement," the release states.

Find culprits behind attack on Darnal in a week, SDF demands

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK 13 JUN:

Sikkim Democratic Front has demanded that Sikkim Police should trace the culprits behind the attack on JB Darnal within a week, failing which the party has threatened to go to court. The party has also decided to present a memorandum regarding the attack to the Prime Minister, Union Home Minister, Governor of Sikkim, Chief Secretary and DGP of Sikkim.

This was decided during an emergency meeting convened by SDF here

at the party headquarter on Saturday. The meeting, which was chaired by the senior vice-president of the party, DB Thapa, has strongly condemned the attack on the SDF spokesperson.

An SDF press release mentions that the meeting passed a resolution that the party will take legal action if the police fails to trace the culprits behind the attack on Mr Darnal within one week.

This unfortunate incident has established the rule of anarchy and murder of democracy in the State, the party adds.

Hilary Mantel's contribution to LRB to come out as book

NEW DELHI, JUN 13 (PTI): A compilation of two-time Man Booker Prize winner Hilary Mantel's essays, book reviews, and memoir from over 30 years of her contribution to the London Review of Books will be published in October.

"Mantel Pieces" will be brought out by HarperCollins imprint 4th Estate and London Review of Books.

"Hilary Mantel's subjects range far and wide: Robespierre and Danton, the Hite report, Saudi Arabia where she lived for four years in the 1980s, the Bulger case, John Osborne, the Virgin Mary as well as the pop icon Madonna, and a brilliant examination of Helen Duncan, Britain's last witch," a HarperCollins statement said.

"There are essays about Jane Boleyn, Charles Brandon, Christopher Marlowe and Margaret Pole, which dis-

play the astonishing insight into the Tudor mind we are familiar with from the bestselling Wolf Hall Trilogy," it added.

Interleaved with letters and other ephemera gathered from the archive, "Mantel Pieces" will have 20 reviews, essays and pieces of memoir spanning over three decades.

Mantel's famous lecture, 'Royal Bodies' explores the place of royal women in society and our imagination. Here too are some of Mantel's LRB diaries, including her first meeting with her stepfather and a confrontation with a circus strongman, the statement said.


"No writer does more for an issue of the LRB than Hilary Mantel. The evidence is here," says Mary-Kay Wilmers, editor of the London Review of Books.

"We're delighted to be working with Hilary and

4th Estate on introducing it to new audiences, and we hope that this is just that latest milestone in an ongoing story, with many more Mantel pieces still to come," says Sam Kinchin-Smith, the London Review of Books' head of special projects.




"... Her diaries and pieces were a trail of breadcrumbs to her novels... The millions of readers who have delighted in the peerless writing of 'The Wolf Hall Trilogy' will find similar rewards here," adds Nicholas Pearson, publishing director at 4th Estate.

This is Mantel's second book to be published this year. The conclusion to "The Wolf Hall Trilogy", "The Mirror & the Light", was published in March to huge critical acclaim. The first two books of the trilogy "Wolf Hall" and "Bring Up the Bodies" - fetched Mantel the Booker awards.



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

The Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) is new strain of Coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China. Notorious for mutating quickly and acquiring new qualities, it is a rising epidemic that was previously not identified in humans.

Symptoms of nCoV	Precautions to Prevent nCoV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever ● Difficulty in breathing ● Dry Cough ● Severe acute respiratory syndrome ● Pneumonia - like symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wash your hands often with soap. ● Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer ● Observe good personal hygiene. ● Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. ● Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms. ● Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats. ● Avoid travel to nCoV affected places. ● Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing.
<p>Treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition. ● No vaccinations available as of now. ● Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected. 	 <p>If you seek help, you may call :</p> <p>-Toll free no. 104</p> <p>District surveillance Officer</p> <p>EAST : 7029372100</p> <p>WEST : 9593297808</p> <p>NORTH : 9641957468</p> <p>SOUTH : 7407691463</p> <p>New STNM</p> <p>AMS : 9434711402</p>
 	
<p>DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE</p> <p>GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM</p>	

What's Your Hobby?

Save the young from boredom, please

The pandemic has left kids with more time than most of them can do anything with. And we are not even talking productive things yet. There is after all only so much time you can spend on devices and most kids must have already exhausted a year's worth of such distractions in the more than two months we have kept them locked in. And don't kid yourself, those online education claims are just not delivering. Meanwhile, Sikkim also has an addiction problem which is getting even more compounded by the lockdown. The routine march of "drug hauls" and arrests under the Sikkim Anti-Drugs Act despite the lockdown on most other businesses makes that more than amply clear. For those who don't waste their time with newspapers, an honest conversation with the heads of the schools or anyone associated with classrooms will bring home the reality of how desperate the situation with alcohol and contraband substances has become here. Agreed, there are earnest interventions underway as well like the SAATHI (Sikkim Against Addiction Towards Healthy India) programme and the clutch of people working with detoxification and rehabilitation now qualify for a medal for the service they are rendering the State. The problem, however, is neither showing any signs of abating, nor is the State anywhere close to figuring out a proper rehabilitation model under which sobriety, in the very least, is reciprocated with proper assimilation back into society.

Speak to students involved in outreach programmes and those who have counseled friends and peers away from addiction, and it becomes clear that ennui is among the leading causes of addiction. The amount of boredom we put our young through is criminal. They rarely go to exciting schools, only occasionally have inspiring classes and rarely offered challenging tasks. Yes, problems at home, peer pressure and ease of access are also factors, but these play supporting roles in the drama of substance abuse which has tedious monotony as the villain. And this boredom is not only distracting the young towards substances that make their "leisure" hours "fun", but is also making more of them disinterested and lacking in passion. A worrying trend noticeable among the young is their increasing resistance to get excited about anything. This, in an age-group which was until recently accused of being easily excitable, is a big worry. And the only way to wean them away from the stupor of their times, is to give them engagements which get them excited, which encourage them to share and feel proud about their progress. Yes, sports delivers on this account as well, but a more inclusive exercise would be giving them hobbies because that demands only passion and interest, is accessible to all, at all times. A group of passionate hobbyists recently held a mega event in Singtam to celebrate their collections with a wider audience. Students turned up in large numbers, and one could sense awe in their eyes and excitement in their voices as they took in the wonder of what, let's accept it, are old fashioned hobbies, like philately and numismatics. Now, let's look around – what are the hobbies of the new generation?

Returning to the problem of addiction and the rehabilitation of those who have gone clean, a common refrain from all of them was that the challenge of staying clean and helping their peers stay clean say them through the most difficult earlier days and made completion of their rehab courses possible. Things fall apart for them the moment they return to the "normal" settings of their everyday lives without the armour of whatever drug or addiction it is that reinforced them earlier. Their self-confidence wobbles and they find themselves somehow inadequate. Yes, giving them skills will help them, but giving them a hobby they are passionate about and keep growing in will give them confidence, provide them the self-esteem boost they need to assimilate back into society. Ditto for schools. Give the young real hobbies, photography for instance or real training in painting or pottery and even carpentry, support them, see them use their time better, and then watch a generation stay away from drugs. Yes, it could be as simple as that...

WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/indecent language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence. Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

I redesigned a school playground for my PhD – and the children got better marks learning outside

MATLUBA KHAN
theconversation.com

The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the education of at least 1.5 billion school students. That's more than 90% of the world's children. Although many schools in the west, along with private schools in the developing world, have continued some school activities online, more than 50% of learners worldwide do not have a household computer. The absence of face-to-face learning and opportunities for playing with friends will have hugely impacted child mental health.

Countries are taking different approaches as to when, where and how to reopen schools, and some places are emphasising the benefits of outdoor learning.

Research has shown that an outdoor environment can improve children's motivation and well-being, and can contribute to increasing children's physical activity and learning outcomes. Learning in nature has been shown to reduce stress and boost mental well-being.

Outdoor learning was traditionally practised in countries across the African and Asian continents, but is increasingly valued less. In many cases, it is only perceived as an option when there is no functioning classroom. But now, more than ever, the benefits of outdoor learning must be capitalised on all over the world.

BANGLADESH

I have been researching outdoor learning environments for more than 10 years. While most research in this area is concentrated in western countries, my own has focused on Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh the net enrolment rate at primary schools is nearly 100%, but only 32% of the children reach higher secondary level (typically completed at ages 16-18). There are many reasons for this high dropout rate, including poverty and child marriage.

But one reason that is rarely considered is the quality of the learning environment. Evidence shows many students drop out because they do not

feel attracted to school and did not like the traditional teaching and learning environment.

Teaching and learning outdoors has been core to the education system in the Indian subcontinent and was practised widely before the education system was formalised. It is still being practised in the town of Shantiniketan, India, established by the Nobel Laureate poet and philanthropist Rabindranath Tagore. But the idea is not mainstream and the political, physical and social infrastructure to support its wider implementation is absent.

I looked into whether learning in an outdoor environment can improve children's academic attainment, motivation and play in a Bangladeshi primary school as part of my PhD. School grounds in Bangladesh are largely barren fields without any features. Clearly this needed to change if outdoor learning was to be encouraged. The school I worked with was a primary school 80 kilometre from the capital city Dhaka.

I wanted the children's input for the redesign. I asked Grade IV children (eight- to 12-year-olds) what they would like to have in their playground for both learning and play. The children drew pictures and shared their thoughts. I brainstormed with teachers separately and asked what they would need in the outdoor learning environment in order to take curricular teaching and learning outdoors.

Then we all participated in a model making workshop, led by the children. I supplied materials based on the drawings made by children and suggestions offered by teachers. We have presented the model to the local community who came forward to help us with whatever resources they could offer.

A NEW CLASSROOM

The children wanted places to explore and experiment, to play and learn together, to challenge them physically and intellectually, to make things and be creative, to connect with nature, to be alone and to reflect. Studies with children from different parts of the world have yielded similar results, showing these preferences are universal.

Teachers, meanwhile, told me that nature can offer opportunities to try out science. They wanted different types of vegetation and a garden in the schoolyard. They requested an area with different loose materials such as twigs, branches, seeds and egg crates to help them demonstrate number theories and other mathematical problems. They also asked for some group learning settings for group activities and an outdoor classroom.

All of these preferences were then taken into account when the Bangladeshi architect, Fuad Abdul Quaium, and myself designed the school ground. We hired local masons and used low-cost materials and technology. The children designed a mural. The school ground was ready for use in January 2015. The teachers led children outdoors regularly for their maths and science lessons.

My research showed that the children's attainment in maths and science improved after teaching and learning outdoors. The Grade IV children performed significantly better in maths and science compared to a comparable school which had had no change in the environment.

Hands-on learning outdoors made learning fun and engaging for everyone, but particularly benefited underachievers. We found that children who didn't interact much in the classroom setting were more pro-active and participated more in their outdoor sessions.

AN OUTDOOR FUTURE

Outdoor classrooms can also provide the space to maintain social distancing while learning. But the school ground should be designed in a way to support teaching and learning, and teachers need training in use of their school ground and surroundings for teaching.

My research strengthens the already existing evidence on benefits of outdoor learning. The study also generates new evidence for its use outside western countries, suggesting outdoor learning has the potential to improve the quality of education all over the world.

[the writer is Lecturer in Urban Design, Cardiff University]



Am I immune to COVID-19 if I have antibodies?

WILLIAM PETRI
theconversation.com

Perhaps the most important question now about COVID-19 is the degree to which a prior infection protects from a second infection by the new coronavirus. This affects vaccine development and herd immunity and is something for each of us to consider as antibody tests are now available.

I am a physician scientist and have a Ph.D. in microbiology as well as an M.D. My clinical specialty is internal medicine and I subspecialize in infectious diseases. I am working on one approach to COVID-19 vaccination while also caring for hospitalized patients.

Here are my responses to common questions surrounding tests and what they can tell you about immunity.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF COVID-19 TESTS?

The nasal swab PCR test that we have all seen in the news, and which 22 million of us in the U.S. have used, reflects whether you are currently infected with the new coronavirus that causes COVID-19. This test detects the genetic code of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in your body. If you have a positive nasal swab PCR result, you not only have the infection, but you are

potentially infectious and should stay isolated until recovered.

In contrast, the antibody test determines if you had COVID-19 sometime in the past. It is measuring your body's immune response to the infection, something that occurs over days to weeks after the infection starts. The antibody can appear after the infection is resolved, or even while you are still infected.

CAN THE IMMUNE SYSTEM CURE COVID-19?

The answer here is a resounding yes. In all but a tiny percent of cases – maybe 1 in 100 – the immune system naturally eliminates SARS-CoV-2 from the body. This is very encouraging for vaccine development, as making an effective vaccine should be much easier than for HIV or hepatitis C virus, for example, where the immune system often (for hepatitis C) or almost always (for HIV) fails. SARS-CoV-2 differs from these two viruses because it has a so-called proofreader gene that prevents mutations from being introduced during viral replication.

DO ANTIBODIES WORK TO PREVENT A NEW CORONAVIRUS INFECTION?

The answer here is maybe. We know that in a test tube antibodies against the virus can neutral-

ize it. That is, they can prevent the virus from entering into a human cell and causing an infection. But not every antibody is equally capable of preventing the virus from causing an infection.

The very best antibodies are ones that neutralize the receptor binding domain of the new coronavirus spike protein that attaches to the host cell's ACE2 receptor. The RBD is on the tip of the spike protein and is the part of the spike that touches ACE2. Antibodies against RBD block the very first step of viral infection, which is when the coronavirus attaches the human cell membrane.

IF MY ANTIBODY TEST IS POSITIVE, AM I IMMUNE?

Another maybe. Clouding the interpretation of a positive antibody test is that we do not yet know if antibodies against RBD make people immune. We also don't know how much of this antibody against RBD is needed to ensure protection.

Complicating things further is the fact that not all of the antibody tests for COVID-19 measure antibodies against RBD. Some tests measure antibodies against parts of the virus that are not needed for cell entry. These antibodies that are not against the RBD will recognize the virus but will not block it from infecting human

cells and triggering viral infection.

So only antibodies that block the spike protein from connecting to the ACE2 receptor are guaranteed to provide immunity. And only antibody tests that measure the amount of these antibodies can predict immunity.

We will have a better understanding of the ability of antibodies against the RBD to protect from infection this summer when large phase III vaccine studies start. This is because these vaccines are designed to make antibodies against the RBD.

SHOULD I GET AN ANTIBODY TEST?

If you are curious whether you had COVID-19 in the past then yes, it makes sense to be tested. Be aware, however, that some of the tests to date have shown a high number of false positives.

If you do have antibodies, do not assume you are invulnerable to the new coronavirus; you might be just as susceptible as someone who has no antibodies.

So even if you do have antibodies, wearing a mask indoors and maintaining social distancing is still key for all of us as we cope with the continued threat from this pandemic.

[the writer is Professor of Medicine, University of Virginia]

Bengal governor a spokesperson of BJP: TMC

NEW DELHI, JUN 13 (PTI): Continuing the duel between the TMC and West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar, party leader Derek O'Brien on Saturday accused him of being a spokesperson for the BJP. The war of words had started after Dhankar expressed anguish over a video purportedly showing the bodies of COVID-19 victims being disposed of in a disrespectful manner in the state.

The video was later declared to be fake by the police, who claimed that the bodies were not of COVID-19 patients and that they were unclaimed and unidentified bodies from the hospital morgue.

In an online press conference, O'Brien, who is TMC spokesperson and leader of the party in the Rajya Sabha, asked why the governor was targeting the state over the coronavirus issue.



"First he would tweet on their behalf and now he is also on TV. He is now officially the BJP spokesperson. He is linking a video of a dead body with coronavirus. Why is he selective on West Bengal? Why is he not questioning what is happening in Gujarat or Madhya Pradesh where the testing is much lower than that of Bengal?"

Look at the situation in Balarampur, where a body was transported in a garbage van, but he does not tweet about that," O'Brien said.

"These things don't draw the attention of this publicity monger, headline hunting maniac, he said, listing the NHRC notice to the Uttar Pradesh government and other incidents which he

said should have drawn Dhankar's attention.

Earlier, in a series of tweets on Saturday, Dhankar again referred to the video and said the manner of disposal of the dead bodies was "uncivilised and uncouth".

"Our age old traditions were mercilessly decimated by repeated dragging of dead bodies by iron hook. Urge im-

mediate apology to society at large, he said.

Claiming that the state was way ahead in testing for the pandemic, O'Brien said while West Bengal tested 9,169 people a day, Gujarat tested 4,000 a day and Madhya Pradesh tested 3,576 on an average per day.

He advised Dhankar to read the COVID-19 bulletin issued by the state daily and then comment on the readiness of the state to deal with the pandemic.

"Only 26 per cent beds in West Bengal are occupied while 74 per cent are still vacant. We have 69 COVID hospitals and 45 testing centres. I just want to remind the governor that he should not compare himself to the chief minister of the state. While she has been elected by the 10 crore people of Bengal, he is a nominated lollypop that the centre gives out," the TMC leader said.

Bengal prepares white paper on cities in post-COVID-19 world



KOLKATA, JUN 13 (PTI): The West Bengal government has prepared a white paper on the future of cities in the post-COVID-19 world, as urban spaces are changing "drastically and rapidly", an official said.

Speaking at a webinar on real estate sector, organised by CII, West Bengal Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation chairman and managing director Debashis Sen said his department has come out with the document on "Reconfiguring Cities in the New Normal".

"Changes are now rapid and a lot of things are changing drastically

in terms of cities, work, home, business and social spaces," a statement quoted him as saying.

Sen cited examples of the Haj House, which has been converted to an international quarantine centre, the Central Forensics Building and part of the Netaji Subhas International Airport here, which have been transformed to isolation centres, while describing how the "adaptive use of buildings" taking place rapidly.

According to him, the shopping malls will become "warehouses of e-commerce" with home delivery of everything becoming the new nor-

mal in the post-COVID era. Cinema halls, multiplexes are very likely to become "data centres" as per the study, he said on Friday.

As far as residences and houses are concerned, he said that home spaces would need to expand as families will work or learn from there.

"Cities will dissolve into small, coherent, hyper-local townships like the IIT campuses, industrial townships in Durgapur and Jamshedpur, which are, in a sense, self-sufficient and gated with their own schools, colleges, shops, workspaces, parks and hospitals," he added.

Gauhati HC dismisses PIL on Assam gas well tragedy



GUWAHATI, JUN 13 (PTI): The Gauhati High Court has dismissed a PIL against PSU major Oil India, a private firm, the Centre and the state over the Baghjan gas well blowout and successive fire in Assam's Tinsukia district.

Hearing arguments from both the petitioner and respondents, the bench comprising Chief Justice Ajai Lamba and Justice Soumitra Saikia on Friday disposed of the public interest litigation filed by environmentalist-cum-entrepreneur Niranta Gohain.

"In Paragraph 4 of the petition, it has been pleaded that the petitioner has no personal interest in the litigation. However, learned counsel for the petitioner states that the petitioner is an entrepreneur and has a lodge in the nearby area.

"Learned counsel, however, has not been able to dispute that all such hotels, motels and lodges are not functional on account of spread of pandemic under the state issued regulations," the order said.

Stating that a prayer was made in the application to conduct an inquiry other than seeking compensation, the court said that a number of probes have already been ordered by various agencies.

"Considering various aspects of the case, this

petition cannot be entertained in the present form. We have taken judicial notice of the fact, as noted above, that enquiries in the incident have already been ordered. The matter is still at incipient stage.

"In such circumstances, the petitioner would be at liberty to file a fresh petition, if genuine public cause demands, however, on the basis of relevant data and findings recorded by the enquiry agencies," the court said.

On June 10, Gohain filed the petition with 12 respondents, including Oil India Ltd (OIL), John Energy Pvt Ltd, and various agencies of the Centre and the state government. Petitioner's advocate Santanu Borthakur had said the PIL seeks adequate compensation to all the affected parties, a proper inquiry into the incident and measures to protect and restore the rich biodiversity of the area.

At present five inquiries are taking place to find out the facts -- a three-member probe by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, a one-member probe by Assam Chief Minister and an internal five-member inquiry by the OIL.

Besides, two more crucial independent investigations of technical nature are being carried out by Directorate General Of Mines Safety (DGMS) and Oil Indus-

try Safety Directorate (OISD).

The chief minister also ordered the Additional Principal Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) to conduct a study on the effects of the explosion on the environment and ecology of the surrounding areas, including on flora and fauna in the adjacent Dibru-Saikhowa National Park.

The well number 5 at Baghjan has been spewing gas uncontrollably for the last 18 days and it caught fire on Tuesday afternoon, killing two of OIL's firefighters at the site.

The blaze at the well is so massive that it can be seen from a distance of more than 30 km with thick black smoke going up several metres high, endangering the local biodiversities.

Though there is no fire in the periphery of the well site at present, the company has declared an area up to 1.5 km of radius as "red zone" to avoid any untoward incident.

Already two officials of the OIL have been suspended for alleged negligence of duty at the gas well site, while a show-cause notice has been issued to John Energy Pvt Ltd, the outsourced private operator of the well.

A case has also been registered against Oil India and John Energy over the incident.

Corbett Tiger Reserve reopens for tourists

RISHIKESH, JUN 13 (PTI): The popular ranges of the Corbett Tiger Reserve including Bijrani, Dhela and Jhirna were opened on Saturday for tourists after a gap of nearly two and a half months.

Corbett Tiger Reserve was closed for tourists following the COVID-19 induced lockdown in March.

However, the Dhikala zone has not been opened for tourists as it is scheduled to be closed

for the monsoon from June 15. The number of people allowed to go in one vehicle for animal safaris has been reduced from six to four including the driver and the guide in compliance with social distancing guidelines, deputy director of Corbett Kalyani Negi said.

During normal times, 60 vehicles, each of them carrying six persons, were permitted to go for day and night safaris in these ranges.

25 new COVID-19 cases in Assam, tally rises to 3,718

GUWAHATI, JUN 13 (PTI): Twenty-five new COVID-19 cases were reported in Assam, taking the state's tally to 3,718, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Saturday.

Of the new cases, 10 are from West Karbi Anglong, five from Jorhat, three each from Baksa and Karbi Anglong, two from Dhemaji and one each Golaghat and Nagaon, the minister said.

Of the total 3,718 cases, 2,123 are active cases as 1,584 people have been cured and discharged from different hospitals of the state and three people had migrated out of the state, the minister said. Eight

people have died due to COVID-19 in the state.

On Friday, the state reported 263 positive cases including 195 late in the night, while 152 patients were discharged from various civil, district and model hospitals after being tested negative, he said.

Kamrup (Metro) has the highest number of positive cases, followed by Dhubri, Hojai, Golaghat and Nagaon.

Guwahati city, which falls under Kamrup (Metro), has more than 60 active cases, including an 11-month old child. The district administration has declared 36 areas in the city as containment zones.

Odisha FC rope in defender Kamalpreet Singh



BHUBANESWAR, JUN 13 (PTI): Indian defender Kamalpreet Singh has signed a two-year deal with Odisha FC ahead of the 17th edition of the Hero Indian Super League (ISL).

After playing a crucial role in Minerva Punjab's first ever I-League title win in 2017-18 season, the 22-year-old fullback represented Kolkata's East Bengal for two seasons. The Punjab-born defender has also played for India in the age-group competitions. "Really excited to be part of the

project at Odisha FC and hopefully will win some silverware with them too," Kamalpreet said.

"I have seen and heard that the club gives a lot of chances to the youngsters, and I am ready to fight for my place in the starting lineup for every game." OFC President Rohan Sharma said Kamalpreet will add the much-needed depth to defence in the team.

"Kamalpreet will be a solid addition to the team. After last season, it was clear that we needed depth in the defense.

OIL suffers 638 tonnes oil, 0.46 mmscmd gas loss post Assam incident

New Delhi, Jun 13 (PTI): Oil India Ltd on Saturday said it has suffered a production loss of 638 tonnes of crude oil and 0.46 million standard cubic metres per day of natural gas following a blowout and massive fire at a well in its Assam field.

Natural gas mixed with condensate started flowing uncontrollably from one of the wells of the company-operated Baghjan fields in Tinsukia district of Assam on May 27, 2020, leading to a blowout. The well caught fire on June 8, killing two fire fighters and injuring one.

The fire led to agitation by locals at OIL assets, leading to shutting down of 66 oil wells and 13 gas wells at some areas in Assam, the company said in a statement on Twitter.

"This led to a produc-

tion loss of 638 tonnes of crude oil and 0.46 mmscmd of natural gas," it said.

OIL said drilling and workover operations were stopped or disrupted at four locations. Crude oil transportation through browser operations were also hampered in some areas.

The petroleum ministry has constituted a three-member high-level committee to inquire into the incident. The panel will be headed by S C L Das, director general of the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH), a ministry order of June 11 said.

It will "identify the lapses in following laid down protocols and procedures which led to the incident," the order said.

The committee will also "recommend short and long-term measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents includ-

ing identifying any gaps in laid down standard operating procedure."


The panel, which also includes former ONGC chairman B C Bora and former ONGC director T K Sengupta, will submit its report within one month, the order said.

OIL said the fire has since been contained to the well and it is trying to put out the fire.

Except at the well plinth area, the fire around the site has been extinguished. However, the burning of gas at the well mouth will continue till the well is capped.

According to OIL, three firemen -- two from OIL India and one from ONGC -- jumped in a water pool nearby when the fire broke out. While the ONGC firemen got injured, two OIL India firemen could not save themselves. Their bodies have been retrieved.

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ECB says systemic racism exists, committed to change



LONDON, JUN 13 (PTI): The England and Wales Cricket Board has admitted that “systemic racism” exists across the country and cricket is not immune to the scourge as it commits itself to bring changes amid the worldwide campaign against discrimination on the basis of skin colour.

In a statement on Friday, the ECB said it must learn from the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement erupted after the killing of African-American George Floyd by a white policeman in Minneapolis.

“We have listened carefully to those who have spoken out in recent weeks about their experiences of being black in cricket, sport and society. We admire them for being vocal on this crucial topic,” the ECB said.

“We know that systemic racism spans institutions and sectors across the country and we know that our sport is not immune,” it said.

The sporting fraternity has joined the worldwide campaign against racial discrimination. England players Jofra Archer and lead pacer James Anderson and West Indians like Darren Sammy and Chris Gayle have spoken against racism, supporting the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement.

We truly believe that cricket is a game for ev-

eryone but understand that sadly, barriers to its enjoyment exist for many communities. We have made progress in bringing cricket to more and more people around the country and it is our resolve to break down barriers and reform our structures everywhere across the game.

“In recent weeks we have reflected, and acknowledged that black players and fans, who have contributed so much to the history of our game, now feel disenfranchised. They do not feel as if cricket is a game for them. This must change.”

ECB said it’s important to “continue to listen to the voices of those who have spoken out, to educate ourselves and face uncomfortable truths in order to create action internally and throughout the game, to ensure long-term change.”

We will now work to engage community leaders and black influencers within cricket so that we can review and evolve our existing inclusion and diversity work and specifically address the issues raised by the black community.

From there, it is our overall desire to create demonstrable action, in order to deliver meaningful and long-term change that permeates every layer of the game,’ the board added.

ANDY BULL

LONDON, 13 JUN [THEGUARDIAN]: Lydia Greenway had big plans for this summer. Last September she was appointed head coach of the new Oval Invincibles women’s team in the Hundred, and right about now she was supposed to be busy getting the team ready for their first match on 24 July. That’s on top of her second job, running Cricket for Girls, the schools coaching programme she set up in 2017. Then lockdown started, the schools shut, and the Hundred was postponed. And while the rest of us settled down to books and box-sets, Greenway got to thinking about a project that had been in the back of her mind for a while, if only she could find time: an online cricket store for women and girls.

Greenway had been reading Caroline Criado Perez’s book, *Invisible Women*, which lays out what Perez calls the “one-size-fits-men approach” to design, the way in which, for instance, the average smartphone has been built to be too big for a woman’s hand. It was a problem Greenway knew about from cricket, where girls often have to play in kit designed for boys, in pads that are too wide, with straps that are too long and with bats that are too big, a problem that, she decided, it was finally time to try to fix for good. So Greenway, who describes herself as “a real technophobe”, started teaching herself how to build a website.

“There were times when I wanted to throw my computer across the room,” she says, “but it is still intact.” The site she built launched on 1 June. So in the space of a few weeks, Greenway had realised an idea she had when she started run-



ning Cricket for Girls, and saw for herself how the sport was changing at that level. Back when she started playing in the 1990s “there was really only one type of girl who played cricket and that was the girl who didn’t mind playing with the boys,” she explains. More often than not, the way into the game was through a male relative. In Greenway’s case, it was her dad. And that same male relative would then sort out the kit.

“You got what you were given,” Greenway says. And since women’s kit was pretty hard to come by, it would most often be stuff designed for boys. These days, “there’s been quite a big shift in the types of girls playing the game, because the route into the game has become much more diverse,” she says. “Now it’s part of the school curriculum we’re see-

ing more and more girls play cricket not because their dad, or their brother, or their uncle, introduced them to it, but because they played it at school. And then suddenly when they say to their parents: – who might have no knowledge of the game – ‘I want to get cricket equipment’, the parents think: ‘Well, where do we start?’”

Back in 2018, an 11-year-old girl called Olivia Cotter made the news when she wrote a letter to Kookaburra complaining that she had been given a voucher for her birthday and wanted to spend it on some Kookaburra pads, like the ones Alyssa Healy wore. But she had to buy some labelled “boys”. “It made me a little bit sad that the size was just called ‘boys’,” Cotter wrote, “as so many girls are playing the game now too. I think you should consider changing the size name from

‘boys’ to ‘kids’.” In fact Kookaburra had already done that, the previous year, but Cotter’s local shop didn’t have the stock. In the end, they had Healy present her with an entirely new set of kit.

Kookaburra are one of the three manufacturers Greenway is working with on this project, along with SM and Viking. “They didn’t need converting to support the women’s and girls’ game,” she says. “They were already doing it.” All three have put a lot of time and effort into developing their girls and women’s ranges. “They’ve been being really specific in the changes they’ve made,” Greenway explains. “The bats are lighter and have shorter, thinner handles, same for the pads. And straps aren’t as long because women and girls have thinner legs, so you don’t get that overhang, same for the gloves. They might

seem like small things, but it makes a big difference.”

These are all steps that take the game away from what it was, towards what it ought to be. Anyone who loves cricket knows what it feels like to buy your first proper kit, anyone who loves cricket can imagine how dispiriting it must be to find those little imperfections in it, telltale blemishes, which tell you it’s not for people like you. “I think about the girls we’ve been coaching, all the parents I’ve spoken to,” Greenway says, “and all they want to do is support their daughters and their pupils and make sure that they’ve got the right stuff, and that’s the biggest reason why I’ve done this. We want to be able to say to those people: ‘Right, this is what we’ve picked for you, you don’t have to sift through the boys’ and men’s stuff. This is just for you!’”

As Fifa urges action against inequality, how is Qatar 2022 looking these days?

Barnet Ronay

Paris, 13 Jun [theGuardian]: If you want to be picky, you could say Raheem Sterling chose an ill-targeted metaphor in his statement this week on racial prejudice and the need for a step-change in football’s power structures.

Comparing the spread of racism to the spread of Covid-19 is probably not the best way to change those minds most in need of changing. Let’s face it, a global Venn diagram of virus-deniers and bigotry-sceptics is likely to feature a fairly dense overlap, a concentration of people who don’t really think either of these things exist. You hear that? He just said racism is fake too! We’re home free!

In the meantime it is interesting the current protests have centred on visible symbols of oppression, and specifically on statues. There has already been some pushback against this from those who find themselves suddenly eager students of 18th century naval merchant culture. But there is good sense in looking at these things again.

Most obviously, statues of the ruling classes are made to be pulled down. Is there anything more tedious than being asked to marvel at the majesty of some tinpot local bigwig? How long is it necessary to keep on venerating someone anyway? For ever? Just for a while? When, oh frowning and austere pre-industrial entrepreneurs, will you be done with us?

As for the idea pulling down a statue that celebrates a slave trader represents the beginning of the end of history, a first step towards tearing



down Dickens and Churchill; well, at some point you have to show a little faith, grow some rust-resistant copper-alloy balls, and say, yes, some things are simply bad. We can cope with this. The centre will hold.

They are significant, these visible marks. Enslavement, the idea one person is simply a chattel, a lesser form of human, has been legislated away. It would, in my opinion, be illogical to suggest people who are alive now should personally apologise for its existence hundreds of years ago. But it is important to understand racial prejudice is a muscle memory of that same principle, an echo that will often go unheard to the naked ear, but is instead scaled back into everyday interactions, decisions, life chances. Getting

rid of words, images and, yes, statues that spread that resonance; well, that just seems as if it is basic good sense.

With this in mind it is good football is talking about power, prejudice and representation, most notably in the form of Gianni Infantino, who has voiced Fifa’s support for an end to abuse and oppression. Football is the dominant popular culture, an arena that should, as Sterling says, be offering up its own plinths, its lighted windows, its plat-forms of power as something exemplary and uncorrupted.

At which point it may just be a good moment to talk about the next World Cup. At a time when every executive office of footballing power is imploring us to consider society’s inequities, how does Qatar 2022 look these days?

There isn’t much point in dressing this up now. Football is two years away from a tournament that is, among other things, a showcase for the glorious productivity of the Kafala system of labour. These working practices have been called a form of modern-day slavery by the International Trade Union Confederation, in conditions across the region that are at times “little more than prisons for workers” according to Amnesty International.

Those gleaming, splendiferous World Cup venues, those repositories of sound and light, are also tributes to the efficiency of a bonded labour force of Bangladeshis, Nepalese, Indians and other migrant people employed to implement this vast global projection of power. Official

figures suggest otherwise, but a counter-commentary of those who monitor the situation suggests there have been thousands of deaths along the way. Should we be sitting in these arenas watching football? Or tipping them into the harbour?

It is worth noting Qatar introduced laws last year to diminish and, it is claimed, abolish the Kafala system, under which foreign workers are essentially tied to their employer, unable to seek another job in the country and often too dependent to leave. These new laws have been described as superficial. Only this week Amnesty revealed migrant workers had gone unpaid by a private Qatari company for up to seven months while building Al Bayt Stadium, unable to leave the job, unable to leave

the country.

This is not intended as a piece of whataboutery or a comparison with the scars and the significance of actual, forced, seagoing, murderous European slavery. This is not some ghastly race to find the greater horror. It is simply to point to the oddity of football’s apparent powerlessness as it asks itself what it can possibly do about oppression and prejudice as it speaks fine words – cheers, Gianni – about the imbalance of power. All the while preparing to shoot off en masse and bask in these glorious migrant-built structures, disposable monuments to a four-week show of power.

What am I expecting to happen here? Instant cultural reforms? Everyone shakes hands and joins the TUC? Ruling elites to issue a tearful Instagram apology (“this has been a powerful personal journey”)? The best outcome is slow reform which, it seems, is already happening.

I guess I am simply agreeing with Sterling when he says there are structural issues that need to be torn down, while also pointing out that he, as a footballer, is stuck right in the middle of this, a passenger in football’s own exploitative networks.

As for those boarded-up statues, they are at least doing their job. They’re making us think about the past and also the present. Welcome, britches-clad men of destiny, welcome splendid new lighted bowls of Fifa, to the idea of the unintended signifier. We will look on you and marvel. Just not, perhaps, in the way you had in mind.

Four killed, over 50 injured in oil tanker explosion in China

BEIJING, JUN 13 (PTI): Four people were killed and over 50 others injured when an oil tanker exploded on an expressway in East China’s Zhejiang province on Saturday.

The explosion damaged nearby residential houses and factory workshops in Tai Zhou city, local authorities said.

According to the state-run China Daily, four people were killed and over 50 injured in the blast.

Video posted online by the state-run CGTN TV showed debris of the exploded vehicle flying all around, causing extensive damage to the neighbouring residential units.

Several cars and vehicles around the area also caught fire following the explosion.

The accident occurred on the highway, leading to the closure of many entrances. Rescue work is underway.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

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US judge says he'll rule quickly on funding for tribes

FLAGSTAFF (US), JUN 13 (AP): A federal judge in the nation's capital said Friday he will work quickly to deliver a ruling in a case centered on who is eligible for coronavirus relief funding set aside for tribes.

US District Judge Amit Mehta heard more than three hours of arguments in the case he characterised as challenging.

He is deciding whether Alaska Native corporations, which are unique to the state, can receive a share of USD 8 billion in funding that Congress approved in March.

Numerous Native American tribes that sued the US Treasury Department, which is tasked with doling out the money, say no.

Mehta earlier ruled to limit distribution to tribal governments while he took on the eligibility question.

The Treasury Department has sent USD 4.8 billion in payments to tribal governments based on federal population data population and has said it will start distributing the rest no later than Monday well past the deadline set by Congress.

Attorneys in the hearing Friday picked apart the language included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act and dissected the history of a federal law that gave tribes the ability to deliver services like health care, policing and housing to tribal members through federal contracts.

Attorneys representing the tribes said Congress intended the virus relief money to go to the 574 tribes that have a political relationship with the federal government.

Because the corporations are not the recognised bodies of government for any tribe, they don't qualify, they argued. They are not in any scenario able to compete with tribal governments for finite resources, said Natalie Landreth.

Riyaz Kanji said Alaska Native corporations do not satisfy a clause in the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act to obtain federal contracts without authorization from the tribal governments themselves. Department of Justice Attorney Jason Lynch disagreed and told Mehta that if the judge finds even one of dozens of regional and village corporations eligible for the funding, all must be deemed eligible.

Daniel Wolff, an attorney representing some of the corporations, pointed to one that he said delivers health care to Alaska Natives in the Anchorage area with the blessing of Congress and without express approval from all village governments. That circumstance is rare. The sovereign tribal villages simply don't have the resources to get the job done" he said.

That's the job of ANCs, that's why ANCs were created." In a related case Thursday, Mehta denied a request from a tribe in Kansas to halt further distribution of the funding for tribal nations.

The Prairie Band of Potawatomi Nation sued the Treasury Department earlier this month, alleging it was shortchanged in the agency's initial distribution of funding. The tribe, whose reservation is north of Topeka, said the Treasury Department should have relied on the tribe's own enrollment data, rather than population data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development .

Conte calls for 'courage' to save Italy at talks with EU, IMF

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte called Saturday for a "courageous plan" when he launched virtual talks with EU and IMF leaders to rescue Italy's economy and society from the "unprecedented shock" triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

Conte said the plan was needed to surmount the nation's crisis as Italian opposition figures shunned the hastily organised and roundly criticised emergency talks.

European Union leaders "must show that they have understood that it is about defending mutual interests," Conte said in an opening speech transmitted to leading executives in Brussels.

"We are in the process of living an unprecedented shock with very high human, social and economic costs," Conte said.

The EU's third largest economy is expected to contract by at least 8.3 percent in 2020, under the most optimistic estimate from Italy's national statistics agency.

To stimulate activity in EU countries most affected by the COVID-19 crisis, the European Commission has proposed a 750-billion-euro (\$847-billion) recovery plan -- 500 billion euros in grants and 250 billion euros in loans.

Italy is expected to receive around 172 billion eu-



ros of this sum.

"We must also take advantage of (the moment) to transform the crisis into an opportunity to eliminate all the obstacles that slowed (the country) down for the last 20 years," Conte said.

He said he shared European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's view that "we cannot allow ourselves to return to the pre-crisis status quo".

- 'Our country's beauty' -

The talks venue is a 17th century palace, the Casino del Bel Respiro, which Conte called a rare choice "to pay tribute to Italian beauty.

"At a time when we conceive the revival, we must make sure the whole world focuses on our country's beauty."

Listening and watching were Von der Leyen, the EU's economic affairs com-

missioner Paolo Gentiloni, European Council President Charles Michel, a former Belgian premier as well as International Monetary Fund director Kristalina Georgieva, a Bulgarian who previously served on the European Commission, the EU executive.

Despite the A-list from Europe, Italians such as far-right leader Matteo Salvini decided sit out Conte's conference, casting it as a media

stunt designed to boost the premier's profile.

Although his approval ratings rose during the coronavirus emergency, Conte faces questions from prosecutors over his handling of the pandemic and now confronts political challenges over the threat of deep recession.

Conte has suggested a task force headed by former Vodafone chief executive Vittorio Colao to come up with

recommendations on how to get Italy's economy back on track.

Conte said last week he wanted to unite "the country's strongest forces" and compile the "most effective ideas" for an economic rebound following two months of lockdown.

He hoped to enrol ruling majority, members of the opposition, trade unions and economic experts to draft guidelines for a recovery plan.

Proposals include digitising Italy's onerous public administration, modernising infrastructure and restructuring the national university system, among others.

But the opposition spurned Conte's invitation and even government officials including Economy Minister Roberto Gualtieri criticised hasty plans and lack of cabinet input.

Salvini seized on initial confusion, writing on Facebook on Monday that "the only certainty" was that there was a rift in the government.

"Meanwhile, thousands of Italian families have still not received a euro, the invasion of illegal immigrants has resumed unabated, appeals by the head of state to speak with the opposition are ignored," wrote Salvini, a former deputy prime minister.

Tokyo Olympics will be safe, governor says



Next year's Olympics will be safe despite the coronavirus pandemic, Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike has said, pledging a "120-percent effort" to ensure the first-ever postponed Games can go ahead.

Koike -- who announced Friday she would stand for re-election next month -- said the city was committed to holding the event as a "symbol of human triumph" over the virus, but admitted it would be downsized.

"I will make a 120-percent effort," Koike, 67, said in an interview with AFP, but declined to say how confident she was that the sporting extravaganza would open as planned.

Tokyo 2020 became the first Olympics ever postponed in peacetime earlier this year as the coronavirus marched across the globe, upending lives and forcing the cancellation of sporting and cultural events.

They are now scheduled to begin on July 23, 2021 -- though they will still be known as the 2020 Games -- but medical experts have raised concerns that the delay will not be long enough to contain the virus and hold the event safely.

Officials in Japan and from the International Olympic Committee have warned it will not be possible to postpone again.

Koike said she was continuing to "make all-out efforts in the battle against the virus to put on a Games that is full of hope".

And she pledged an event "that is safe and secure for athletes and fans from abroad as well as for residents of Tokyo and Japan".

- A simpler, cheaper Games -

Japan has got through the first coronavirus wave better than many countries, with just over 900 deaths out of fewer than 18,000 confirmed infections.

But it has faced persistent criticism for conducting relatively few tests that could understate the true number of cases.

Officials point to the comparatively low death rate as evidence that a recently lifted state of emergency -- imposed in response to rising cases in April -- and a public awareness

campaign on social distancing have worked.

"Tokyo residents know that the summer Games next year in 2021 is not possible unless the impact of coronavirus calms down," Koike said.

"That was among the things that pushed them to make these efforts."

Japanese and Olympic officials have repeatedly said it is too early to tell how the pandemic will have evolved by the run-up to the rescheduled Games.

For now, Koike said "simplification and cost reduction" are the main planks of discussions, along with potential safety measures.

"What kind of (virus) tests and how? How much social distancing is necessary? These will depend on future discussions," she said.

- Preparing for a second wave -

The final price tag of postponing the Games remains unclear and the delay has also rattled sponsors.

A survey this week showed two-thirds of Tokyo 2020's corporate sponsors are on the fence about continuing their backing.

But Koike insisted the event would still be an "excellent opportunity" for sponsors and said she would be asking for their "continued support".

The governor, who broke with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to run for the job in 2016, will stand for a second four-year term next month.

She has been mentioned in the past as a possible future prime minister, and in 2017 stunned the political establishment by forming a short-lived new party that was seen as a potential challenger to the LDP.

But Koike, who has described Japan as having not a glass ceiling for women but rather an "iron plate", was tightlipped on whether she might one day seek to become the country's first female prime minister.

For now, she said she is busy "preparing for the second wave of infections with the knowledge gained and experience earned".

Hertz allowed to sell \$1 bn in shares despite bankruptcy

Coronavirus-hit car rental company Hertz was granted permission Friday to sell \$1 billion in shares, an extraordinary move after it declared bankruptcy in the United States and Canada.

The unusual green light was given by a bankruptcy court in the US state of Delaware, which "held a hearing and approved the Motion," according to documents filed by Hertz with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The company says it will sell the shares at its discretion in terms of timing and volume.

Hertz is trying to capitalize on a surge in its volatile stock price since it filed for bankruptcy on May 23.

Trading at less than a dollar at the end of last week,



shares are now worth three times as much, even peaking at \$5.53 at the beginning of the week. On Friday the stock climbed 37.38 percent during the day, but fell 10.5 percent to \$2.53 at 2130 GMT in after-market trading.

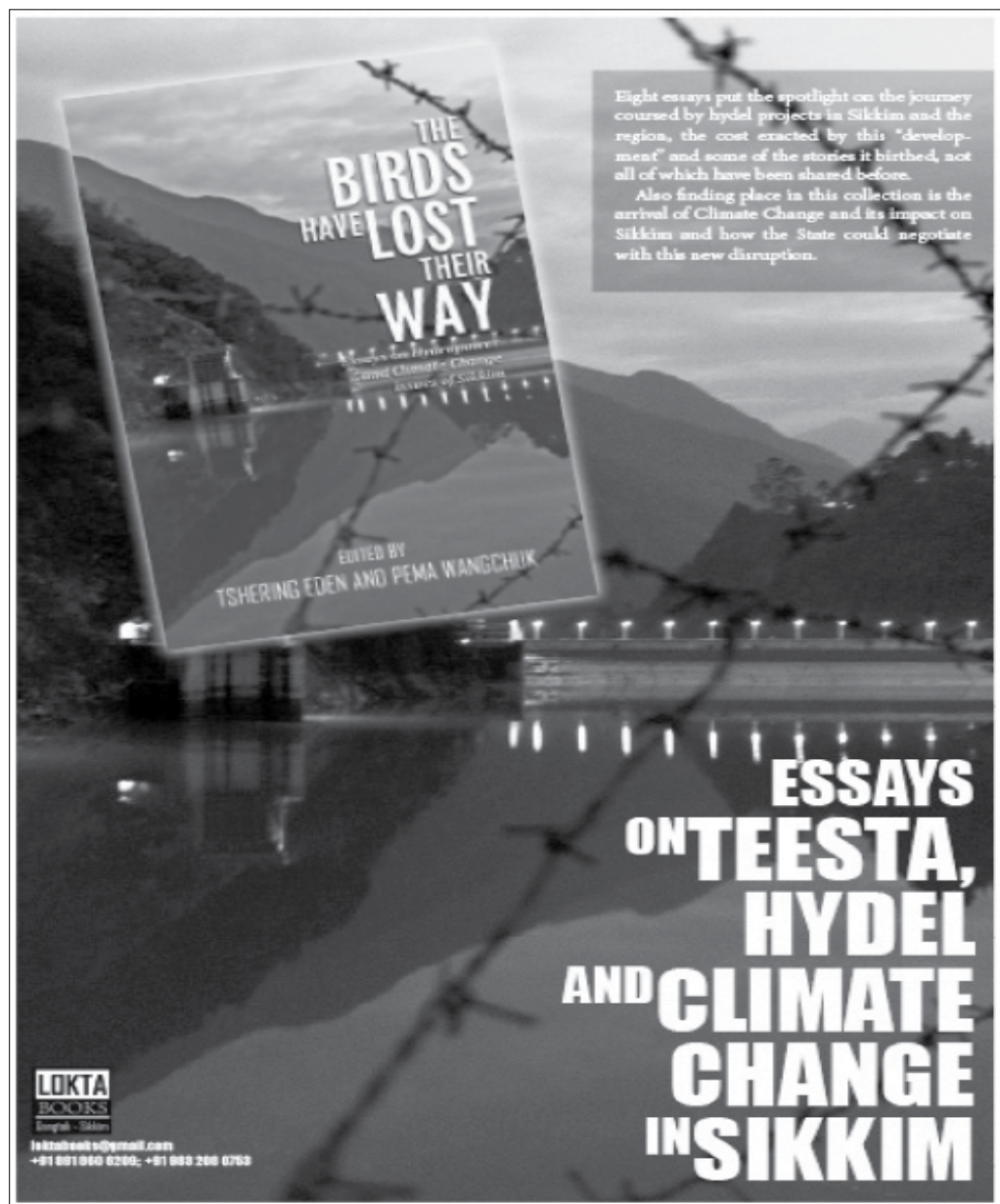
Traditionally, shares of bankrupt companies lose value with debt repayment taking precedence.

Experts say in Hertz's case, however, the price has been affected by the abundance

of cheap money flooding the economy after the US Federal Reserve turned on the tap to combat the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Traders after a good deal are also playing a role.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Hertz -- which filed for bankruptcy after lockdowns imposed to stop the spread of COVID-19 devastated the car rental industry -- is buried under \$19 billion in debt.





GABBING AND DRINKS TO GO!

Actress, Cara Santana chatted on her phone after picking up two organic juices in Los Angeles.

Gone With the Wind' Paris screening cancelled by Warner Bros

LOS ANGELES, JUN 13 (PTI): Warner Bros has decided to call off the screening of *Gone With the Wind* at the Paris' Rex Theater on June 23.

The decision comes days after WarnerMedia-operated streaming service, HBO Max, removed the film in the wake of the mass protests against systemic racism and police brutality, following the death of African-American man George Floyd in police custody.

The 1939 film, considered to be a classic, focuses on the love story of Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler during the American Civil War. In past decades, the film has been criticised by many for its portrayal of slavery and African Americans.

The Paris screening of *Gone With the Wind* was scheduled to celebrate the reopening of theatres in France after a three-month shutdown due to coronavirus pandemic. Rex Theater announced the cancellation of the film's screening on its official Twitter page.

Warner Bros. is letting us know that they wish to cancel the screening of *Gone With the*

Wind. Thank you for your understanding, the post read.

Earlier this week, in a Los Angeles Times op-ed John Ridley had asked HBO to remove



Victor Fleming's *Gone With the Wind* from its platform as it romanticises the horrors of slavery. In response to Warner Bros' decision to remove the film from HBOMax and cancel the Paris screening, Ridley told Deadline

that now was the time to understand what was wrong with the Academy Award-winning movie.

I can say this as somebody who's been fortunate enough to get one, but receiving an Oscar doesn't make your work great. What makes your work great is if it can stand up to comparisons, if it can stand up to the test of time, if it can stand up to context.

No, I don't believe that no one should ever be allowed to see *Gone With the Wind* again. Let it exist, but with even a slight bumper up front that might make for deeper conversations. Let us study it. Let us understand what was wrong about it, what did work in it, he said.

Tip: Trust the messages that are coming through from the higher realms. They are affirming your path.

CANCER:

Your current circumstances bring John Rohn's famous quote to mind: "If you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree." It's true that certain things are beyond your control, but how you respond to the given challenges is entirely up to you. Tap into the power of free will, Cancer.

Tip: You have the power to bring about change.

LEO:

Anybody can be an influencer, Leo. There's nothing you cannot buy on the internet these days! But few people have what it takes to be the voice of their generation. Do you aspire to join the league of greatness? The secret to getting ahead in the game is staying true to your message rather than succumbing to the numbers game. You owe it to yourself, beautiful. Remember, most revolutionaries were misunderstood in their times. So, don't worry too much about what other people are saying or not saying about your progress!

Tip: Wield your power for the greatest good.

VIRGO:

There are times when everything works out effortlessly and then there are times when you push and push with no avail. The Universe is showing you duality at its best. Get ready to witness both ends of the spectrum today. What you need to keep in mind when things aren't working out though is that, at any point of time, your victories outweigh your failures. So be gentle with yourself, Virgo. Learn from your mistakes without giving yourself too much grief for them as you applaud your ability to show up, every single day,

despite life's many storms.

Tip: You're witnessing duality at its best.

LIBRA:

Look at you transforming your negative beliefs about love and allowing yourself to receive what you have been giving so freely to others! This is a magical time in the Libra HQ, one that speaks of bliss, harmony, and togetherness. Say 'I do' if you haven't already, or exchange virtual promise rings. You don't have to look outside for a sign, wild one.

Tip: Let the rhythm of your heart guide you.

SCORPIO:

Scorpio, you are experiencing deep, inner alchemy right now, one that is taking your self-love game to a whole new level. It's true that you've made plenty of mistakes. But then again, who hasn't? Bringing forth the gift of forgiveness is an integral part of this transformation process. Light the torch of awareness in the so-called dark places. Remember, we are not here to be perfect. We're here to be whole and integrated.

Tip: Be gentle with yourself.

SAGITTARIUS:

A Jordan Belfort quote you want to remember now and forever: "If it doesn't bring you income, inspiration or orgasms, it doesn't belong in your life." Sagittarius, you're fully aware of the things that are beginning to smell stale around here. It's time for you to channel your inner dark goddess and cut the cords that are no longer serving you. If you're dealing with a toxic relationship at the moment, find the courage within you to break the cycle. The Universe knows you deserve better. The real question is: Do "you" believe that for yourself?

Taylor Swift calls for removal of 'racist' monuments in Tennessee

LOS ANGELES, JUN 13 (PTI): Taylor Swift has said the presence of many "racist" monuments in her home state of Tennessee makes her feel sick as she demanded their removal.

Swift has been quite vocal in her support to Black Lives Matter movement in the aftermath of George Floyd's custodial killing at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In a Twitter threat on Friday, the 30-year-old star took aim at two specific Confederate monuments in her home state.

"As a Tennessean, it makes me sick that there are monuments standing in our state that celebrate racist historical figures who did evil things. Edward Carmack and Nathan Bedford Forrest were DESPICABLE figures in our state history and should be treated as such," Swift said.

She also dwelled upon the "monstrosity" known as the Nathan Bedford Forrest Equestrian Statue, a 25-foot monument dedicated to the Confederate general and Ku Klux Klan grand wizard.

"Nathan Bedford Forrest was a brutal slave trader and the first grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan who, during the Civil War, massacred dozens of black Union soldiers in Memphis," the singer

said. Swift called on Capitol Commission and the Tennessee Historical Commission to permanently remove the monuments.

"Taking down statues isn't going to

eous patterns of racism from heroes' to villains.' And villains don't deserve statues," she added.

Confederate monuments in many southern US states have reemerged as



fix centuries of systemic oppression, violence and hatred that black people have had to endure but it might bring us one small step closer to making ALL Tennesseans and visitors to our state feel safe not just the white ones," she said.

"We need to retroactively change the status of people who perpetuated hid-

a national flashpoint since the death of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man who died after a white Minneapolis officer pressed his knee into his neck for several minutes.

Protesters decrying racism have targeted Confederate monuments in multiple cities, and some state officials are considering taking them down.

Matrix 4' release pushed back to April 2022

Los Angeles, Jun 13 (PTI): Keanu Reeves-starrer *Matrix 4* will now release on April 1, 2022. The fourth installment in the sci-fi franchise was earlier scheduled to bow out on May 21, 2021. The Warner Bros and Village Roadshow co-production, *Matrix 4*, is written and directed by Lana Wachowski.

The cast also includes Carrie-Anne Moss, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Jessica Henwick, and Neil Patrick



Harris. Legendary Pictures' monster crossover *Godzilla vs Kong*, which was set to hit the theatres on November 20, will now release on May 21. According to Deadline, Warner Bros has also moved cartoon action hybrid *Tom & Jerry* from December 23 to March 5, 2021. Robert Zemeckis' feature adaptation of Roald Dahl's *Witches*, starring Anne Hathway, has been removed from the release schedule of the studio.

Warner Bros delays theatrical release of Tenet, Wonder Woman 1984

LOS ANGELES, JUN 13 (PTI): Warner Bros has decided to push back the release dates of two of its much-anticipated projects Christopher Nolan's espionage thriller *Tenet* and Patty Jenkins-directed superhero film *Wonder Woman 1984*.

Tenet, starring John David Washington, Robert Pattinson, Elizabeth Debicki, Kenneth Branagh, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Michael Caine, Clemence Poesy, Dimple Kapadia and Himesh Patel, has been delayed by two weeks. The film, which was scheduled to hit the theatres on July 17, will now bow out on July 31.

However, to mark the 10th anniversary of Nolan's sci-fi blockbuster *Inception*, the studio is re-releasing the film in the US theatres on July 17.

We're especially thrilled, in this complex and rapidly changing environment, to be bringing Christopher Nolan's *Tenet*, a global tentpole of jaw-dropping size, scope and scale, to

theaters around the world on July 31.

It's been longer than any of us could've imagined since we've seen a movie on the big screen, and to acknowledge Chris' fans as we count down to *Tenet*'s opening day, we are also excited to offer his masterpiece *Inception* in theaters for its 10th anniversary on July 17, Toby Emmerich, chairman of Warner Bros. Pictures Group, said in a statement to Deadline.

Gal Gadot-led DC superhero movie *Wonder Woman 1984* has been postponed by Warner Bros from August 14 to October 2.

The film, a sequel to 2017 movie, has been delayed for the second time. It was originally set to release on June 5, but was pushed back until August due to the coronavirus-induced theatre shutdown in many countries across the globe.

it also features actors Chris Pine, Pedro Pascal and Kristen Wiig.

Dan Berk, Robert Olsen to helm new horror film for Amblin Partners

LOS ANGELES, JUN 13 (PTI): Filmmakers Dan Berk and Robert Olsen are set to write and direct a horror film, set up at Amblin Partners. According to The Hollywood Reporter, the duo pitched the movie to the studio which later decided to pick it up.

They are best known for directing 2019's darkly comedic thriller "Villains".

Though the plot details have been kept under wraps, the untitled movie is rumoured to be a "social horror".

Joby Harold and Tory Tunnell will produce the project through their banner Safehouse Pictures. Matt Schwartz will serve as an executive producer.

Pandit Birju Maharaj trains Rajnesh Duggall for Bajirao Mastani' musical

MUMBAI, JUN 13 (PTI): Filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali's period romance film "Bajirao Mastani" is getting a live stage musical adaptation with Kathak exponent Pandit Birju Maharaj attached as the creative director.

The musical based on the 2015 film, starring Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh, will be directed by Maitreyee Pahari.

Actor-model Rajnesh Duggall, will play Peshwa Bajirao in the play and is currently training under Birju Maharaj.

"I am extremely glad to have been trained under the guidance of Pandit Birju Maharaj ji for the musical. This is something I have never done before," Rajnesh said in a statement.

"While initially the plan was to take it to different cities and countries, there is a possibility that it will go online. The talks are still on," the actor added.

ARIES:

Aren't you tired of taking everything so seriously and carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders? The cards are urging you to change the approach a little, to think of the world as if it were a playground. You're here to have fun, make mistakes, and learn a few lessons along the way. So, don't get too attached to the outcome of what you are creating. As for the things you are struggling with, know that you will find creative solutions once you let go of your false sense of control.

Tip: Think of the world as your playground.

TAURUS:

There are times in our lives when we try every trick in the book to no avail. The doors that are locked refuse to open and the people who are meant to assist us in the journey get caught up in their own trials and tribulations. And then there are times when pathways magically clear themselves, our desires manifest with minimal efforts and people we know little about become a catalyst for this positive shift. The Universe is playing for your team, baby! **Tip:** Spirit is about to manifest major miracles on your behalf!

GEMINI:

You somehow manage to pick up your phone every time it is 11:11am/pm, your pizza delivery bill reads 'Rs 555' and you could swear the raven by your window this morning was here to deliver a message from the higher realms. No, you're not going crazy, Gemini. You're just upgrading to a whole new frequency. Welcome to the new normal! The things about signs and symbols is that they're entirely personal. You could turn to Google to make sense of what's you're coming through. But isn't it so much more powerful to listen to your intuition?

Tip: Trust the messages that are coming through from the higher realms. They are affirming your path.

CANCER:

Your current circumstances bring John Rohn's famous quote to mind: "If you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree." It's true that certain things are beyond your control, but how you respond to the given challenges is entirely up to you. Tap into the power of free will, Cancer.

Tip: You have the power to bring about change.

LEO:

Anybody can be an influencer, Leo. There's nothing you cannot buy on the internet these days! But few people have what it takes to be the voice of their generation. Do you aspire to join the league of greatness? The secret to getting ahead in the game is staying true to your message rather than succumbing to the numbers game. You owe it to yourself, beautiful. Remember, most revolutionaries were misunderstood in their times. So, don't worry too much about what other people are saying or not saying about your progress!

Tip: Wield your power for the greatest good.

VIRGO:

There are times when everything works out effortlessly and then there are times when you push and push with no avail. The Universe is showing you duality at its best. Get ready to witness both ends of the spectrum today. What you need to keep in mind when things aren't working out though is that, at any point of time, your victories outweigh your failures. So be gentle with yourself, Virgo. Learn from your mistakes without giving yourself too much grief for them as you applaud your ability to show up, every single day,

despite life's many storms.

Tip: You're witnessing duality at its best.

LIBRA:

Look at you transforming your negative beliefs about love and allowing yourself to receive what you have been giving so freely to others! This is a magical time in the Libra HQ, one that speaks of bliss, harmony, and togetherness. Say 'I do' if you haven't already, or exchange virtual promise rings. You don't have to look outside for a sign, wild one.

Tip: Let the rhythm of your heart guide you.

SCORPIO:

Scorpio, you are experiencing deep, inner alchemy right now, one that is taking your self-love game to a whole new level. It's true that you've made plenty of mistakes. But then again, who hasn't? Bringing forth the gift of forgiveness is an integral part of this transformation process. Light the torch of awareness in the so-called dark places. Remember, we are not here to be perfect. We're here to be whole and integrated.

Tip: Be gentle with yourself.

SAGITTARIUS:

A Jordan Belfort quote you want to remember now and forever: "If it doesn't bring you income, inspiration or orgasms, it doesn't belong in your life." Sagittarius, you're fully aware of the things that are beginning to smell stale around here. It's time for you to channel your inner dark goddess and cut the cords that are no longer serving you. If you're dealing with a toxic relationship at the moment, find the courage within you to break the cycle. The Universe knows you deserve better. The real question is: Do "you" believe that for yourself?

Tip: It's time to let go of all that is stale around you.

CAPRICORN:

You are stepping into an important phase of your career, one that requires you to be consistent in your efforts. But the hustle is something you have never been afraid of. What you could potentially struggle with is the noise and distraction of the outside world. Word for the wise: establish boundaries at home and put your phone on flight mode. Going on a social media detox is a good way to stay distraction-free.

Tip: The project at hand needs your undivided attention.

AQUARIUS:

Maybe you're not tired because you're doing too much. Maybe you're tired because you are doing so little of what sets your heart on fire. It's never too late to live a life that's purposeful; to find a middle ground between your passion and your profession. Take a moment to make a list of all the things you enjoyed when you were little. If money wasn't a concern, would you consider doing these things for the rest of your life?

Tip: What's the one thing you would do for the rest of your life if money was not a cause of concern?

PISCES:

It's a 'make art, not war' kind of day in the Pisces HQ. You're in the mood to channel your emotions onto the canvas—anger, sadness, joy, ecstasy, and melancholy. For you, art is not just a medium of expression. It's a form of catharsis. A way of emotional release. Remember, you're not here to be perfect. You're here to be you. Stay true to your message and know that those who are meant to connect with it will find a way to align their path with yours.

Tip: Stay true to your message.